PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE REVIEW

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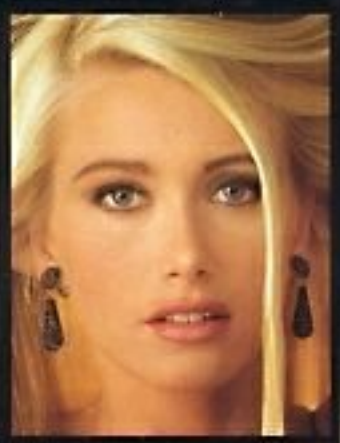

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TENTH ANNUAL
112-PAGE
ROUNDUP OF
THE PAST YEAR'S
DELIGHTFUL
DOZEN

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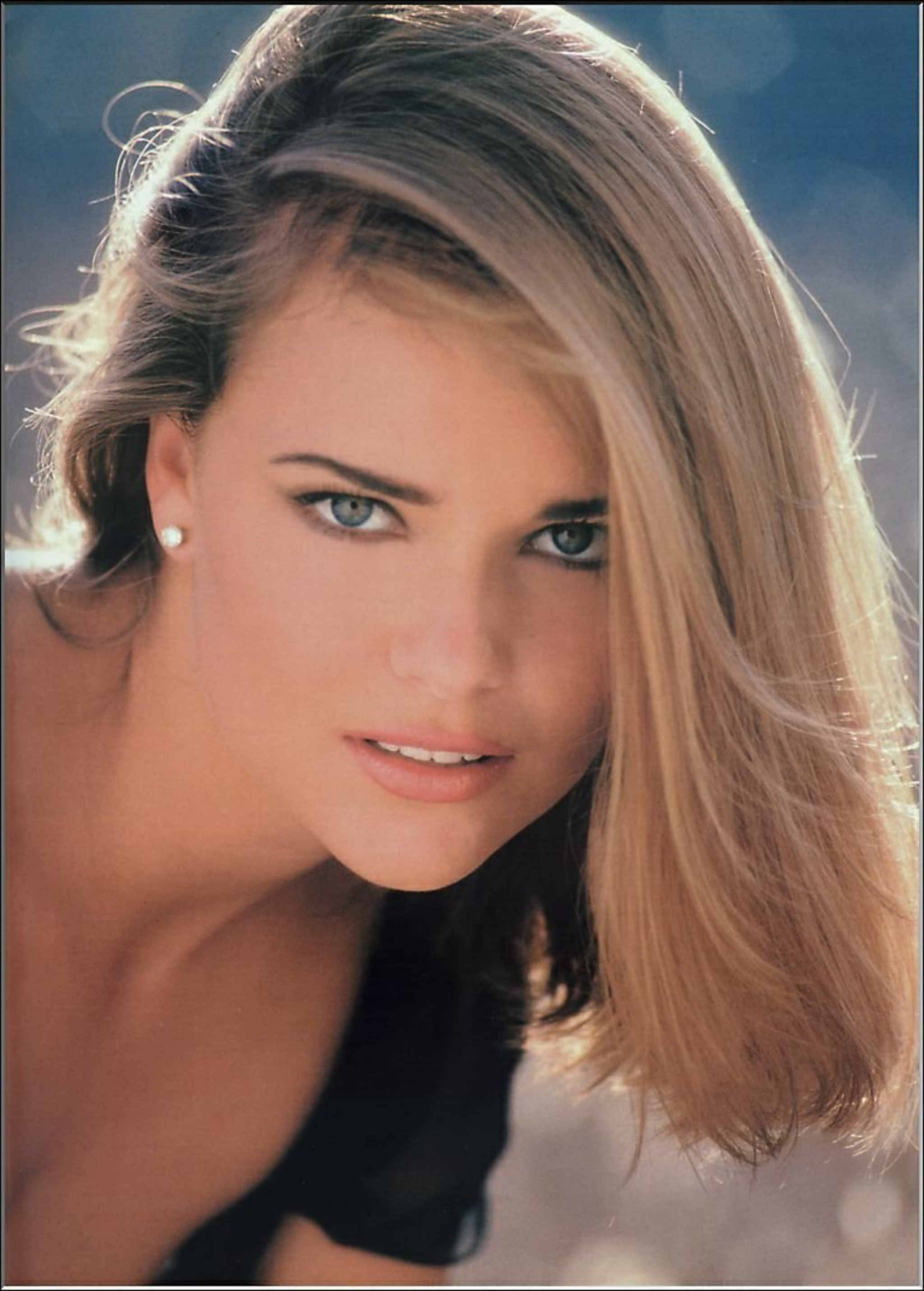
MISS JANUARY

ECHO JOHNSON

Juggling college courses and a burgeoning career makes downtime a scarce commodity, but Echo is used to a hectic schedule. The summer after high school, she won the Miss Santa Fe 1992 title and was spotted by a photographer shooting for Playboy Germany. The rest, as they say, is history; her gatefold was published six months later. In addition to catalog modeling, Echo reports, "I landed ads for Guess because of my Playmate layout. It's been a great year. Working with PLAYBOY has opened doors for me." Though she grew up in New Mexico, she now makes her home deep in the heart of Texas. "I'm not a big country music fan," she says with a laugh. "I love soul and rhythm and blues—Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye and new performers like Toni Braxton." Staying in shape is a pleasure, not a chore. "I love running, walking and weight training." Echo goes roller-blading or bicycling for relaxation, but for excitement she's going to try out scuba diving or hang gliding.



Coors
BEER
WHISKEY

MISS FEBRUARY

JENNIFER LEROY

We caught up with Jennifer in Taipei just as the Chinese New Year celebrations were beginning. She was intrigued by the festivities, but they cramped her style. "I'm going out to Hard Rock Cafe with some other models tonight," she said. "We're bummed out about the holiday, because there won't be any work all week." After a month overseas, she was feeling homesick. "I'm really close to my mom and miss her a lot. But I love traveling." A good thing, too, since modeling assignments over the next few months will take her from Taiwan to Germany and Africa. Switzerland, Sweden and Austria are at the top of her future sightseeing list. At the moment, however, Jennifer yearns for home and American food. "In Taipei, the only foods I like are spinach gomae and bean sprouts. When you work eleven hours a day and live in a hotel room, you snack a lot." But all those quiet evenings have paid off. She has finished college correspondence courses in sociology and English.

MISS MARCH

KIMBERLY DONLEY

A native of a small town in Illinois, Kimberly currently divides her time between Los Angeles and Phoenix. Despite her success, she thinks of modeling as "something I can fall back on." She'd rather continue her education and reach her career goal of teaching children. Aside from swimming, Kimberly confesses that she's "not very athletic." One of her favorite recreational activities is "snowmobiling above Tucson with friends." As befits a half-Irish colleen (Swiss and German on her mother's side), she dreams of visiting Ireland. Friends would say she's "a lot of fun, laughs a lot and tends to be too nice to strangers." Her favorite way to spend an evening is "dinner with close friends, maybe going out afterwards." If the outing should include casino-hopping, Kimberly can more than hold her own at blackjack: "I won about $3500 in Atlantic City." She also plays a mean game of gin rummy, loves Italian food and her grandmother's pot roast, and insists she's still a Midwestern girl.

MISS APRIL

NICOLE WOOD

Keeping up with Miss April is not always easy. The former tomboy loves skiing, and was a busy participant in Playboy Ski Fest last winter. In addition to her PLAYBOY promotions and modeling, she has taped a wine and cuisine show that will air on CBS, and you may already have caught her television appearances on *Comedy Central* and *Night Encounters*. Nicole was a nursing student when discovered by PLAYBOY. She's switched to acting school, but she's leaving her options open: "I may go into an X-ray tech position in the future." If she could have dinner with anyone of her choosing, Nicole's tablemate would be Garth Brooks. "I'm a real fan, and met him two years ago." Another fantasy is to "ride a donkey down to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, explore, and hang out in the desert." Nicole describes herself as an old-fashioned girl. She prefers staying home to going out on the town. A perfect evening is "a romantic dinner for two, a nice bottle of wine, lots of candles and a bubble bath."

OLET

MISS MAY

ELKE JEINSEN

The fair-haired Fräulein is hosting a variety show for German TV. "Since I was Playmate, I've been very busy," she says with a charming accent. Elke was a celebrity in her hometown before her appearance as Miss May in U.S. PLAYBOY because she was Miss October 1986 in the magazine's German-language edition. She keeps an apartment in Los Angeles, where she takes speech and acting classes, and another in Hanover. "I like L.A. I like everything American. But there's more work here than in Los Angeles. I work every day when I'm in Germany." Shuttling between Hanover and the West Coast has become routine. In a year and a half, she made the trip thirteen times. And she has packing down to a science: "It used to take me three hours; now it takes five minutes. I bring one suitcase and one big bag." Nor is she tired of traveling: "I get tired after about a month somewhere. It's funny—I miss each place when I'm not there." Plans to scuba dive in Hawaii are next on her agenda.

MISS JUNE

ALESHA ORESKOVICH

An English major whose ultimate goal is teaching, Alesha is leaning toward graduate school. In the meantime, she's plucked a plum summer job. She'll work with PLAYBOY from behind a desk, rather than in front of a camera, honing her writing skills during an editorial internship. We got in touch with Alesha upon her return from Mexico City, where she had been promoting HBO Ole, the Latin American pay-TV channel. "HBO just got the Cinemax account and their service will be showing Playboy programming." Then it was back to a routine of study for the comely coed. "School takes up all my time. It's a struggle, but I've kept up a 4.0 average." Appropriate marks for someone who describes herself as "serious" and "focused." Dancing is another talent she would like to perfect. "I've never had formal training, and would like to study ballet or jazz. In commercial work I have to pick up steps quickly." You can see more of Alesha in the *Playboy Electronic Datebook*.

MISS JULY

LEISA SHERIDAN

Walking her dog Bear, who's part wolf, Leisa was approached and asked, "'Was your dog in a magazine?' It was so funny," she recalls. "He noticed the dog first. I had extra copies of my issue in the car, so I autographed one for him." Appearing as an extra in *Red Sun Rising* has convinced Leisa that her future lies in the movies. When we talked, she was planning to begin acting lessons in a few weeks. Our phone call caught her on a layover from Mexico en route to St. Bart's. "I love to travel. Every time I get money, I use it on vacations." Early this year, between modeling assignments, she spent a few weeks each in Grand Cayman Island and Florida, then visited her family back East. No grass grows under Leisa's feet. Even on home turf in L.A., relaxation often means a road trip to Palm Springs or Las Vegas. "I go for the sun or the shows—I don't gamble." Her fantasy itinerary includes Tahiti, Bermuda or anywhere else that's tropical. Clearly, Leisa is in her element in the *Wet & Wild V* video.

MISS AUGUST

JENNIFER LAVOIE

With her mother, Jennifer runs a successful accessories business, making tapestry luggage, handbags and totes. "Sometimes we use vintage material, mostly floral patterns. The line sells really well." She manages to squeeze in commercial work and she models extensively for shoewear companies. Jennifer was a ringer at Playboy Ski Fest. "I'm a good skier. I can do the expert slopes, but no moguls." She was swamped with autograph requests when her centerfold video and *Wet & Wild V* came out. "I'm kind of a local celebrity. My issue sold out all over New Hampshire." Jennifer participated in a fundraiser for the Arthur Ashe AIDS Foundation and one for California's earthquake victims. "I like doing charity work for Playboy, and I've met some terrific people that way." This wholesome girl-next-door has virtually no vices. "I don't smoke or drink, but I'm always eating. Anything with sugar in it, especially chocolate." What's the way to her heart? "Just feed me."

MISS SEPTEMBER

CARRIE WESTCOTT

Fresh from a vacation in Mexico, Carrie jokingly advised against kayaking "after margarita parties. Especially in the Pacific—the water's so much colder than the Caribbean!" Carrie admits that she likes to party, but believes in hard work, too. Recent projects include commercials for Pepsi and Budweiser (one with Shaquille O'Neal); a print job for L.A. Gear; music videos for MTV; and a co-starring role on Fox TV's *Martin*. You might see her on *Family Feud* going up against "the soap opera studs." When we asked their names, she drew a blank. "There's no time for soaps," she sighs. For Playboy, she's done two *Secret Confessions & Fantasies* episodes and a *Night Dreams* video. Things have been going well for this native Californian. "I enjoy doing commercials, but I don't really consider it 'acting.' I don't have any specific goal at the moment in terms of the Hollywood scene. I'd like to do a few spots a year, then take the money and run off to an exotic island with my boyfriend."

US

MISS OCTOBER

JENNY McCARTHY

Jenny walked away with Playmate of the Year honors, along with something the L.A. transplant desperately needed: a shiny new Chevy Z28 Camaro convertible, which was named PLAYBOY's Car of the Year in the February 1994 issue. Jenny also managed to beat out heavy competition at a recent audition for the Playboy Channel. You can catch her act as a veejay on *Hot Rocks*, a music video showcase. She also landed a part in an episode of *Silk Stalkings*. Modeling and TV commercials round out her busy schedule. But film acting is her ultimate goal: "Ideally, Meg Ryan or Goldie Hawn–type roles." Don't bother asking her about the hottest night clubs. Jenny's idea of a great evening is as unpretentious as her Midwestern roots: watching movies and eating pizza. She doesn't worry about her diet because she jogs every morning and takes an aerobics class in the evening. Given her combination of natural charm and plucky determination, we'd lay odds that good fortune will keep smiling on Jenny.

MISS NOVEMBER

JULIANNA YOUNG

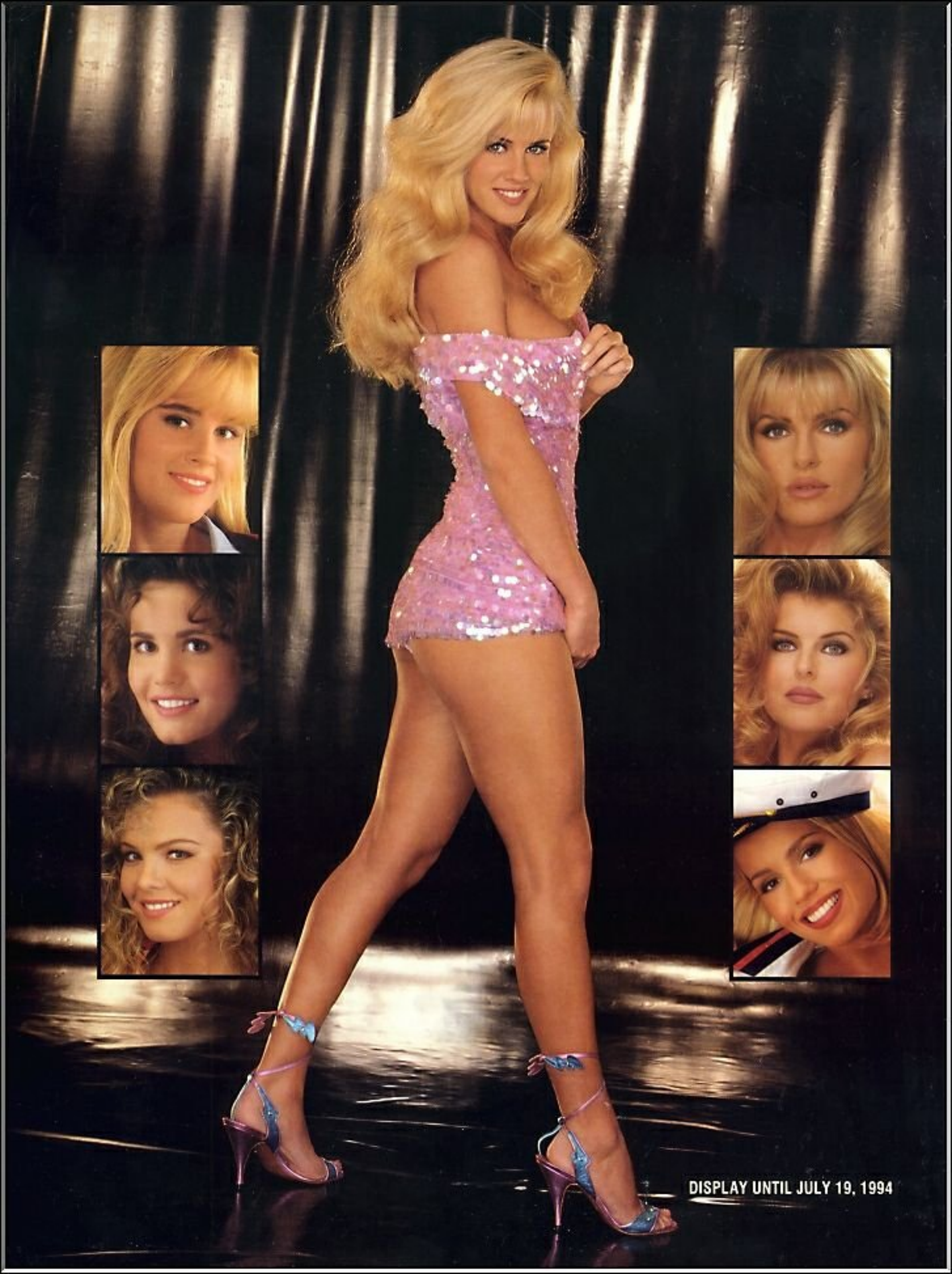
Julianna is studying acting, but she isn't committed to a theatrical career. "What I really want is a good, solid relationship with a nice athlete." She's turned down movie parts to stay in Florida, which she dubs "a sunny place for shady people." The line is original, just like Julianna. Sports are her passion. She rattles off the names of professional athletes like a seasoned sportscaster. "I go to games all the time: the Miami Dolphins, the Miami Heat and the Marlins. I save my money so I can have a wild time on the fifty-yard line. I haven't missed a Super Bowl for the last five years." When she visited the Florida Marlins training camp wearing a Playboy T-shirt, she wound up signing autographs all day. She hoped to meet the players, but was too shy to introduce herself. When not cheering on the home team, she likes speed boating and deep-sea fishing. For Julianna, Mr. Right will be "athletic, with a great sense of humor, and not intimidated by an independent woman with a big heart."

ack magic
woman

MISS DECEMBER

ARLENE BAXTER

Miss December is a regular on Seattle TV's *Evening Magazine*. She also hosts a radio show on a major rock station. "I have a lot of fans in the area." After ten years of modeling, "radio is such a nice break. I love it, it's a lot of fun, and it has nothing to do with your looks." Modeling assignments, an international motorcycle show and commercial castings filled her dance card in recent months. "I shoot a lot of commercials in Vancouver—that's where it's really happening for film now." Modeling and commercials help pay the rent, but Arlene doesn't lose sight of the big picture. She particularly enjoys working charity events and radio call-in fundraisers. "That's why I got a tattoo with the yin and yang sign on my ankle, to remind me that it's important to find some sort of balance—with no guilt." Despite her international success, "I giggled when asked to be a Playmate. I said I'd talk to my parents. Luckily, they were supportive, because PLAYBOY has been a breakthrough experience for me."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